

That which is claimed:

1. In an intelligent switched telecommunications network, a method for setting a limit on the duration of a voice channel communication, comprising the steps of:
 - a) receiving a communication from a subscriber on a first network element, said communication causing said first network element to send a request to a second network element;
 - b) in response to said request, sending a message from said second network element to said first network element, causing said first network element to request entry of demarcation information, wherein said demarcation information comprises a demarcation interval;
 - c) receiving said demarcation information at said first network element; and
 - d) communicating said demarcation information to said second network element, causing said second network element to store said demarcation information.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of storing said demarcation information comprises:
 - comparing said demarcation interval to a default demarcation interval;
 - determining which quantity is a lesser quantity; and
 - storing said lesser quantity as said demarcation interval.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said demarcation information further comprises a time period to which the demarcation interval applies.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said demarcation information further comprises identification information for a first station participating in said voice channel communication.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said demarcation information further comprises identification information for a second station participating in said voice channel communication.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving of said demarcation information comprises receiving said demarcation interval as a monetary quantity.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said first network element comprises a service switching point.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein said second network element comprises a service control point.

9. The method of claim 1, further comprising billing for accepting and enforcing said demarcation information.

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10. In an intelligent switched telecommunications network, a method for providing a demarcated voice channel communication, comprising the steps of:

- a) receiving a communication at a first network element, said communication having identification information associated therewith, including identification information for a first station and a second station;
- b) providing said identification information from said first network element to a second network element;
- c) in response to receiving said identification information, said second network element:
 - i) determining a demarcation interval for said communication based on demarcation information provided by a subscriber, and
 - ii) providing a demarcation message to said first network element, said demarcation message including said demarcation interval; and
- d) in response to receiving said demarcation message, said first network element:
 - i) routing said communication for connection between said first station and said second station, and
 - ii) indicating the expiration of said demarcation interval.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of said first network element indicating the expiration of said demarcation interval comprises said first network element playing a demarcation signal, indicating said expiration of said demarcation interval.

12. The method of claim 10, wherein the step of said first network element indicating the expiration of said demarcation interval comprises said first network element effecting the disconnection of said communication.

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13. The method of claim 10, wherein said identification information comprises a password, said password causing said second network element to determine that said demarcation interval is infinite.

14. The method of claim 10, wherein said step of said second network element determining said demarcation interval comprises said second network element determining said demarcation interval based on demarcation information relating to said first station, said demarcation information being accessed through said identification information.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein said step of said second network element determining said demarcation interval comprises said second network element determining said demarcation interval based on demarcation information relating to said second station, said demarcation information being accessed through said identification information.

16. The method of claim 10, wherein said step of said second network element determining said demarcation interval comprises said second network element

determining said demarcation interval based on a monetary rate for said communication as calculated using said identification information.

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17. The method of claim 10, after said step of said first network element playing said demarcation signal, further comprising the step of said first network element effecting the disconnection of said communication.

18. The method of claim 10, further comprising the steps of:

e) after said step of said first network element routing said communication, said first network element:

measuring the duration of said communication, and

providing the measured duration of said communication to said second network element; and

f) in response to receiving said measured duration of said communication, said second network element deducting said duration from said demarcation interval set by said subscriber.

19. The method of claim 10, wherein said first station is an originating station for said demarcated voice channel communication.

20. The method of claim 10, wherein said first station is a terminating station for said demarcated voice channel communication.

21. The method of claim 10, wherein said first network element comprises a service switching point.

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22. The method of claim 10, wherein said second network element comprises a service control point.

23. The method of claim 10, further comprising billing for said providing of said demarcated voice channel communication.

24. A system for setting a limit on the duration of a voice channel communication, comprising:

a first network element, functionally connected to an intelligent switched telecommunications network;

a second network element, functionally connected to said intelligent switched telecommunications network, wherein said second network element comprises:

a caller-controlled call demarcation entry component, and

a demarcation information data store, wherein said demarcation information comprises a demarcation interval; and

a signaling system 7 link functionally connecting said first network element and said second network element.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein said demarcation information further comprises a time period to which the demarcation interval applies.

26. The system of claim 24, wherein said demarcation information further comprises identification information for said first station.

27. The system of claim 24, wherein said demarcation information further comprises identification information for a second station.

28. The system of claim 24, wherein said caller-controlled call demarcation entry component further comprises a monetary rate to demarcation interval converter.

29. The system of claim 24, wherein said first network element comprises a service switching point.

30. The system of claim 24, wherein said second network element comprises a service control point.

31. The system of claim 24, wherein said second network element further comprises a billing element.

32. A system for providing a demarcated voice channel communication, comprising:

an intelligent switched telecommunications network;

a first network element, functionally connected to said intelligent switched telecommunications network;

a second network element, functionally connected to said intelligent switched telecommunications network, wherein said second network element comprises:

- a call demarcation component, and
- a demarcation information data store, wherein said demarcation information comprises a demarcation interval;

a signaling system 7 link functionally connecting said first network element and said second network element; and

a first station functionally connected to said first network element.

33. The system of claim 32, wherein said first network element comprises a demarcation signal component.

34. The system of claim 32, wherein said first network element comprises a communication disconnection component.

35. The system of claim 32, wherein said identification information comprises a password, said password causing said second network element to determine that said demarcation interval is infinite.

36. The system of claim 32, wherein said demarcation comprises a first station demarcation interval.
- A) 37. The system of claim 32, wherein said demarcation comprises a second station demarcation interval.
38. The system of claim 32, wherein said call demarcation component further comprises a monetary rate to demarcation interval converter.
39. The system of claim 32, wherein said first station is an originating station for said demarcated voice channel communication.
40. The system of claim 32, wherein said first station is a terminating station for said demarcated voice channel communication.
41. The system of claim 32, wherein said first network element comprises a service switching point.
42. The system of claim 32, wherein said second network element comprises a service control point.

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- A) 43. The system of claim 32, wherein said second network element further comprises a
billing component.